THE Prentice Bulletin
THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

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BACKING UP

...better to be safe than sorry

Think about how much your information is worth. If your were to lose all your data, what would this mean? Could you recover it? Could you continue your project? Backing up is insurance for your precious data.

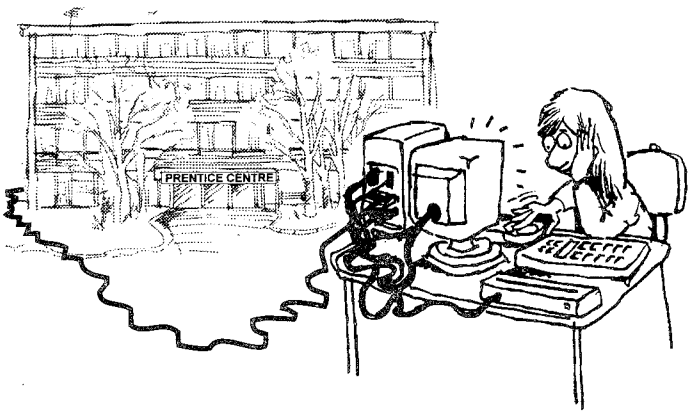
It is important for data to be backed up and know it could be recovered should there be a disaster. Danny Smith, Technical Director of AUSCERT (computer and network security) has dealt with many situations where people have lost valuable data. "The continual shift from central to desktop computing places the responsibility for backing up data on the individual. It is vitally important to have a good backup strategy to ensure a good recovery should disaster strike."

If you know little about computers or backing up, you need someone reliable to take care of it for you. On the other hand, if you do have computing expertise, you might appreciate someone else handling this routine, but important task, at a low cost for you.

Prentice is offering a new cost-effective backup service. Backups are done on a daily basis, as an automatic process performed via the network at a convenient time to you. Both small and large systems can be backed up, from desktop computers through to an entire departmental system. Operating systems we can backup are Windows '95, Windows NT, Novell, and many versions of Unix (*Macintosh will be possible later*). We understand the sensitive issues regarding confidentiality and security of backup data, so we have taken measures to ensure your data is safe from unauthorised access and accidental loss.

Wilfred Brimblecombe, Senior Support Programmer, has been involved in the new Data Backup and Archive service since its instigation. "If you backup every day, then this new service could save you 45 minutes per week which would allow you time for more productive work. **This could save you 39 hours a year. Compare that with the cost of this service. Backing up a PC with 1 Gb is $440 per year**. And remember, there are no added expenses for backup media and hardware."

For a *FactSheet* on the Data Backup and Archive service (including pricing), contact Client Service (ext 54400, website http://www.uq.edu.au/pcc-factsheets/home.html).



One stop at Prentice for document preparation

Few offices have the personnel, time or equipment to address all aspects of document preparation, but Prentice offers services to assist you.

❖ Photocopying
Prentice offers bulk photocopying. Single- or double-sided copying onto A4 or A3 paper, along with collation and stapling. *Copyright restrictions apply.*

Fast Laser Printing ❖
High-speed lasers, capable of single- and double-sided printing onto A4 & A3 are available — ideal for bulk printing.

❖ Binding
Student assignments, reports, course notes and other large documents look great when bound. We offer both spiral and heat-seal binding in various colours.

Data Entry ❖
Accurate and fast data entry is useful for surveys (phone ext 53967).

❖ Text and Image Scanning
Give us your printed text to scan and we'll create a wordprocessing file. There's no need for you to retype! We also scan images and line art.

Exam Marking ❖
Prentice offers a fast and efficient service to mark and analyse multiple choice and true/false exams.

❖ Surveys
You create the questions and we copy them onto pre-printed survey forms. We scan the responses, and analyse results. Talk to us first about what we can do.

Data Conversion ❖
We take files from tapes or disks, and convert the format to another system or medium *(media device restrictions).*

❖ Workstation Lab
The Lab has PCs and Macintosh computers with a variety of popular software packages for general use.

For more information on any of these services contact Operations (ext 54129).

Prentice supports Careers and Counselling computers

Just four months ago, Careers and Counselling Department upgraded their computing equipment. A medium sized department of 40 staff with little computing experience, they knew maintaining the new computing equipment was going to be beyond their ability. Careers and Counselling now has a Facilities Management agreement with the Prentice Centre to manage this new equipment.

Initially, the Prentice Centre's job was to set up an NT Server and 40 PCs. Bruce Tills, Acting Director of Careers and Counselling said, "Prentice staff saved us from a lot of computing problems we wouldn't be able to solve, and I'm sure they fixed a lot of problems we never even found out about.

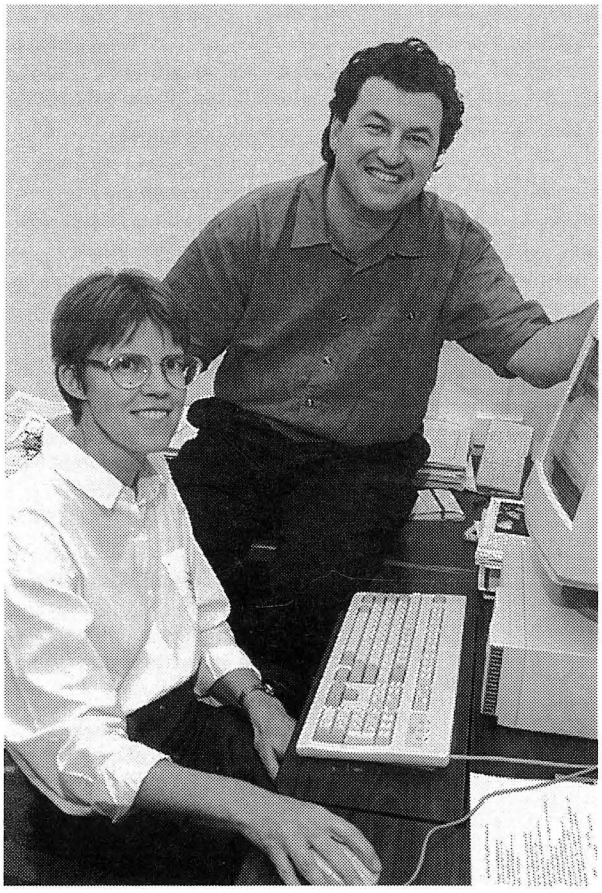
"For us, the most obvious benefit of the Facilities Management agreement is the clear level of assistance it provides. Our staff have someone to contact when there is a problem. In the past we didn't know who we should be calling for help.

"Someone with more expertise than us is keeping an eye on things on a regular basis so we don't have to. That frees us from the time and pain of problem solving, and someone is always in touch with what is happening.

"When things do go wrong, we need someone who can identify the issue. We are not sure whether a problem is to do with hardware, software, the network or the operator. Prentice staff will solve the problem for us. They provide something we would not get from an outside service agency."

As part of the Facilities Management agreement Prentice staff perform a variety of tasks on a regular basis such as: installing software; maintenance (eg, backups); hardware fault-finding; software evaluation; anti-virus protection; printer and CD-ROM sharing setup; database access setup; plus more.

Given the increasing complexities of running computers (eg, Internet access, compatibility with other systems, network security), a Facilities Management agreement with the Prentice Centre is a cost-effective method of managing a computer site. It is an alternative to employing a staff member, and is beneficial in its ability to cover sick and recreation leave, as well as the access to a range of staff expertise within the Prentice Centre. We can tailor an agreement to your needs. If you are interested in finding out more on how a Facilities Management agreement with Prentice can benefit your department, call Carmel Hegarty on ext 54407 or email c.hegarty@cc.uq.edu.au.



Left: One of the advantages of Facilities Management is onsite support. Here, Sue Dengate of the Prentice Centre provides face-to-face assistance for Bruce Tills, Acting Director of Careers and Counselling.

Secure passwords can be easy to remember

Simple passwords are not safe, but complex ones are often difficult to remember, especially when we use several passwords. However, it is possible to choose a secure password that is easy to remember.

One technique is to choose a phrase and use part of each word, such as the first two letters, then introduce some non-alphabetic characters (eg, THRA1NSP can be remembered as THe RAin 1N SPain).

Another technique is to replace the first character of the first word in the phrase with a <SHIFT>1, the second character of the second word with a <SHIFT>2, and so on. For example, *my red dress* would be !YR@DDR#SS.

Note both these examples should NOT be used as they are now published, and therefore not secure. Password cracking programs can potentially break any password eventually, so change your password frequently (eg, every 3 months). Do not share it with anyone, don't write it down, and never reuse it.

In addition, do not use the same password on many systems, because if one password is cracked, then access is granted to all your accounts. Do not use a pattern easily detected (such as thra1nsp, thra2nsp, thra3nsp).

For more information on creating secure passwords, refer to *FactSheet 17: Choosing a Secure Password.*

Mailing List

Following our survey in July's *Bulletin*, we have begun our new distribution method for *The Prentice Bulletin.*

Those readers who responded saying they wish to receive a personalised copy will continue to do so. For other readers, we are mailing departmental secretaries and DLOs bundles of *Bulletins* and asking them to distribute these throughout the department.

Readers who wish to browse the *Bulletin* on the Web can find it at:
http://www.uq.edu.au/pcc/publications/bulletin/home.html/